that the rate of interest on farmers loan may be reduced to 4 per cent simple interest and should not be compounded on arrears;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any decision on this;

(c) if not, reasons therefor; and

(d) if so, when it will be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Government have decided to allow the farmers to secure, effective from kharif 2006-07, short-term credit at 7% with an upper limit of Rs.3,00,000 on the principal amount.

Special package for relief to farmers

†2909. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to give a special package to provide relief to the farmers;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the outlines of the proposals under consideration for special-package scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government is drawing up a package for the districts worst affected by the incidence of suicide by farmers. The package would address their credit, insurance, irrigation and subsidiary income needs, through dairy, poultry and horticulture.

Agriculture production in Andhra Pradesh

2910. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the production of some of the agricultural products in Andhra Pradesh during the last five years has come down

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

gradually such as foodgrains, oilseeds, sugarcane, jute, etc., causing a serious concern;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to revitalize the agriculture sector, especially in Andhra Pradesh;

(c) how exactly the State is benefitted under Macro Management Programme of Government; and

(d) how many hectares in the State are covered under drip and sprinkler irrigation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) The production of foodgrains, oilseeds, sugarcane and jute and mesta in Andhra Pradesh during the last five years shows a mixed trend as shown below:

(*Production in lakh tonnes*)

Year	Foodgrains	Oilseeds	Sugarcane	Jute & Mesta $
2001-02	148.36	16.14	180.82	6.72
2002-03	106.54	12.56	153.87	6.13
2003-04 (Fully Revised)	136.97	16.14	150.70	4.70
2004-05 (Final)	133.96	22.09	157.39	4.58
2005-06*	161.03	20.05	179.40	4.57

* 3rd Advance Estimates

$ Production in lakh bales of 180 kgs. each.

(b) The Government is implementing a number of schemes for development of agriculture, horticulture and livestock sectors in the states including Andhra Pradesh. The strategies formulated by the Government to increase the agricultural production and productivity include (i) increased institutional credit flow to the farmers and strengthening of cooperative credit structure; (ii) ensuring timely availability of quality inputs; (iii) promoting farmers friendly, demand driven agriculture extension system; (iv) accelerating diversification to high value crops including horticulture activities; (v) Strengthening infrasturcture and the supply chain; (vi) optimizing the efficient utilization of available water resources through

micro irrigation and enhancing the sustainability of dry-land/rainfed farming system;

(vii) reforming agricultural markets and widespread use of post harvest technology; and (viii) putting in place an appropriate risk management apparatus for farmers.

(c) The Macro Management of Agriculture scheme was launched in 2001. Under this Scheme, the States have been given flexibility to develop and pursue activities on the basis of their regional priorities. Under this scheme, assistance is provided for various inputs and training of farmers/ extension workers as well as supply of critical inputs like seeds, sprayers and water saving devices like sprinklers and drip systems, Production of breeder seed, foundation seed and certified seed, crash programme for quality seed production, distribution of certified seed, and minikits. Under this scheme, the States are encouraged to include new interventions and best farm practices.

The allocation and utilization of funds under the scheme in Andhra Pradesh during 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 are shown below:

(Rs. in lakh)

Year	Allocation	Utilization
2003-04	3400.00	3279.20
2004-05	3600.00	3712.18
2005-06	3300.00	–

(d) As on 31.03.2005, 1.11 lakh hectares under drip irrigation and 0.84 lakh hectares under sprinkler irrigation have been covered in Andhra Pradesh.

Rural industries set up by Khadi Gramodyog Commission

2911. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of rural industries set up in the villages by the Khadi Gramodyog Commission and the number of persons employed therein, State-wise and particularly in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the number of registered rural industries/units, State-wise;